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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, SHUM

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH GENERAL VIOLA ON IAHRG

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7073

1. UPON MY RETURN TO POST I OBTAINED AN APPOINTMENT WITH GENERAL VIOLA FOR 11:00 O'CLOCK SEPTEMBER 23 TO REVIEW HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE CURRENT STATE OF US-ARGENTINE RELATIONS, VIOLA RESTATED HIS COMMITMENT TO LEADING ARGENTINA TOWARD A DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND HIS BELIEF THAT ARGENTINA MUST WORK WITH THE US TO FURTHER OUR COMMON OBJECTIVES. HE SAID THEY WOULD BE MAKING A DETERMINED EFFORT TO IMPROVE MATTERS IN BOTH THE POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS FIELDS. I TOLD HIM THAT THE DECISION TO ISSUE A LETTER OF INTEREST TO ALLIS CHALMERS HAD BEEN MADE AND THAT AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS FACT WOULD BE FORTHCOMING IN THE NEAR FUTURE. I TOLD HIM THAT THOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE MADE PUBLIC, THE LETTER OF INTEREST DID CONTAIN A CONDITION THAT THE IAHRG ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO VISIT BY THE GOA. THIS DID NOT BOTHER VIOLA WHO SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THAT AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VISIT COULD BE MADE SOMETIME BETWEEN THE 15TH AND 20TH OF OCTOBER. HE ALSO

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WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH THE OTHER INDICATIONS OF US INTEREST IN GOOD RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA, THE APPROVAL OF MANY FMS CASES. HE SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT THE GOA (AND BY IMPLICATION THE USG) HAD MAINTAINED THEIR PATIENCE DURING A TRYING PERIOD, FROM WHICH WE ARE NOW GOING TO EMERGE.

2. TLATELOLCO. I MENTIONED THAT THE GOA'S FAILURE TO DEPOSIT THE RATIFICATION OF THE NFZ TREATY HAD RAISED SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR INTENTIONS. VIOLA CLAIMED HE WAS UNAWARE OF THIS POINT AND STRENUOUSLY ASSERTED THAT THE TREATY ACTUALLY HAD BEEN RATIFIED. HE COMMITTED HIMSELF TO STRAIGHTENING THIS OUT WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA IN THEIR WEDNESDAY MEETING.

3. VAKY VISIT. VIOLA INQUIRED ABOUT THE VAKY VISIT AND SPECIFICALLY WHAT IT MIGHT EXPECT TO ACHIEVE. I TOLD HIM THAT THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY WOULD LIKE TO REVISIT BUENOS AIRES, WITH WHICH HE HAS MANY TIES, WHEN CONDITIONS PERMITTED, BUT THAT HIS PRIMARY INTEREST IS MAKING A VISIT WHEN HE COULD BE HELPFUL TO THE COURSE OF OUR RELATIONS.

4. MASSERA VISIT. WHEN THE CONVERSATION TURNED TO THE SUBJECT OF ADMIRAL MASSERA'S DEPARTURE FROM THE JUNTA, GENERAL VIOLA SAID THIS HAD TAKEN PLACE WITHOUT INCIDENT

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AND THAT MASSERA WOULD NOW BE MAKING A TOUR OF A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES TO ENLIST SUPPORT FOR HIS POLITICAL AMBITIONS. I MENTIONED THAT MASSERA HAD WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT CARTER REQUESTING AN APPOINTMENT WITH HIM, THI WHICH VIOLA RESPONDED IT WOULD BE TERRIBLE IF MASSERA WERE RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS SURE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD NO WISH TO BECOME INVOLVED IN ARGENTINE DOMESTIC POLITICAL ISSUES AND THAT PRESUMABLY MASSERA

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WOULD BE RECEIVED CORRECTLY, BUT AT A LOWER LEVEL APPROPRIATE FOR HIS STATUS AS A FORMER JUNTA MEMBER.

5. VIOLA'S COMMENTS ARE GENERALLY CONFIRMED BY OTHER EMBOFF'S SEPARATE MEETINGS THE PREVIOUS DAY WITH COLONEL CERDA AND RICARDO YOFRE OF THE PRESIDENCY. YOFRE HAD A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT DATE FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE IAHRV VISIT (FIRST WEEK OF OCTOBER). HE CLAIMED THAT THE ARGENTINE INTERNAL POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT WERE ESSENTIALLY SEWED UP AND ONLY DETAILS OF TIMING REMAINED. HE SAID THAT FOREIGN MINISTER MONTES KNEW ONLY THAT THE PRESIDENCY IS HANDLING THE MATTER OF AN IAHRV VISIT. HE STATED THAT MONTES ALSO WAS TOLD NOT TO TAKE ARLIA TO ANY MEETINGS WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS BECAUSE OF THE ADVERSE REACTION HE INEVITABLY GENERATED. HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT TLATELOLOC WOULD BE RATIFIED (OR THE RATIFICATION DEPOSITED) WITHIN A FEW WEEKS. IN COMMENTING ON ADMIRAL MASSERA'S AMBITIOUS FOREIGN TRAVEL YOFRE STATED THAT THE GOA'S AMBASSADOR TO CARACAS (FEDERICO BARTFELD), WHO HAS RECENTLY BEEN SEEN " ON VACATION" IN WASHINGTON, IS ACTUALLY WORKING ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR MASSERA'S TRIP. CERDA PROVIDED LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC DETAIL BUT CONFIRMED THE GOA'S COMMITMENT TO MOVE AHEAD ON THE IAHRV INVITATION.

6. COMMENT: IT IS MY IMPRESSION THAT VIDELA-VIOLA ARE IN CONTROL AND ARE COMMITTED TO THE VISIT. AT THIS MOMENT THE PLANS SEEM TO BE ON THE RAILS AND MOVING AHEAD. CASTRO

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